

IRAQI DESTINY

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Aviators focus on small villages in 101st area of operations

The soldiers of the 101st Aviation Regiment have fixed their focus on the little guys.

The helicopter regiment, based at Qayyarah West Airfield with 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, is conducting numerous community projects in the half-dozen villages surrounding the airfield with hopes of bringing positive, permanent changes to their living standards.

In the massive tidal wave of reconstruction taking over northern Iraq, it can be easy to forget about the small villages dotting the landscape, fifty people here, two hundred there. Some villages are populated by a single, extended family.

"It all started when the villagers showed up at the gate, saying they needed water," said Maj. Fred Wellman, operations officer, 6th Battalion, 101st Avn. Regt. "When we came to their villages, we realized they've never had fresh water, they've never had a school, they've never had electricity, and the doctors not working."

While much of the division has its hands full in the larger towns and cities, setting up

governments, restoring power, training police officers, and conducting other important projects, the aviators turned an eye inward to their neighbors.

"The theory is, if we get along with our neighbors, it'll be good for security," Wellman said.

Perhaps the most critical issue for the villagers is a clean water supply. For years, many villagers got their water from the airfield now occupied by division soldiers. The village of Jadali Sofa had a single 1.5-inch pipe running out to it. But water no longer flows from the airfield.

Ajbah, a 700-person settlement and the only Kurdish village west of the Tigris River, once received water from the airfield through a four-inch pipe, but their supply was cut off by the Iraqi military in 1998.

The villages are now importing potable water until another solution can be reached. Soldiers are sending water trucks to the villages to help lessen the water burden and are also laying plans for a direct pipeline from the larger towns along the Tigris as well.



Pfc. James Matise

Col. Greg Gass, commander, 101st Aviation Regiment, and Maj. Fred Wellman, operations officer, 6th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, look over a dilapidated school house in Ajbah, Iraq targeted for improvement.

There is now a water committee, made of unit representatives, in place which considers each village's individual needs and will implement a comprehensive plan for the region.

Much of the planning

focuses around items already available to the villages. Ajbah plans to use the old 4-inch pipe that used to run from the airfield.

See VILLAGES, page 5

Stop loss lifted by Army in another wave

On July 1, 2003, Mr. Reginald J. Brown, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, approved partially lifting Stop Loss for 22 of 24 selected officer specialties and enlisted specialties subject to the Army's all component 12-Month, Skill-Based Stop Loss Program.

The decision to execute a fourth partial lift of Stop Loss will affect approximately

1,200 Active Army, 970 Army Reserve and 975 National Guard soldiers between now and January 2004. These soldiers, as they begin their transition from the Army, will be provided sufficient time to complete transition/career counseling processing and demobilization activities for Ready Reserve soldiers. Personnel strength managers from all Army components will regulate separation dates to ensure there

are no adverse impacts on Army-wide readiness.

The following officer and warrant specialties and enlisted Military Occupational Specialties for Active Army and Ready Reserve Soldiers subject to the all component 12-Month, Skill-Based Stop Loss will no longer be subject to Stop

See STOP LOSS, page 2

101st celebrates 4th, CG reenlists 158

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) celebrated America's 227th birthday in grand style Friday at the division headquarters, located at the former Presidential palace overlooking the banks of the Tigris River.

The Independence Day festivities culminated in a mass reenlistment ceremony, where 158 soldiers assigned or attached to the division stepped forward, raised right hands in front of their fellow soldiers and swore to continue defending the Constitution of the United States.

"We say this is a great day

or a great evening or a great whatever in the Army, and a great moment for that soldier, because the Army gets greater every time any soldier raises his or her right hand and agrees to stay in our ranks," said Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander, 101st Airborne Division and Coalition Forces in Northern Iraq. "Tonight is a night that I think is unprecedented. 158 great soldiers who raise hands, take the oath and stay in our ranks for a number of more years."

See REUP, Page 4



Staff Sgt. William Armstrong

On the 4th of July, 158 soldiers raise their right hand to recite the oath of enlistment. The oath was administered by Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), at the Division Headquarters, which used to be one of Saddam Hussein's Palaces in Mosul, Iraq.

STOP LOSS, from page 1

Loss:

Officer Specialties: 30 Information Operations, 34 Strategic Intelligence, 35 Military Intelligence, 45A Comptroller, 48G Foreign Area Officer (Mideast/North Africa), 51C Contract & Industrial Management.

Warrant Officer Specialties: 152C OH-6 Scout Pilot, 153D, UH-60 Pilot, 154C CH-47D Pilot, 311A, CID Special Agent, 351B, Counter Intelligence Technician, 351E Human Intelligence Collection Technician.

Enlisted Soldier Military Occupational Specialties: 52E Prime Power Production Specialist, 74B Information Systems Operator, 95B Military Police, 95C Correctional Specialist, 95D CID

Special Agent, 96B Intelligence Analyst, 97B Counter Intelligence Agent, 97E Human Intelligence Collector, 97L Translator, 98G Voice Interceptor.

Secretary Brown approved four increments of Stop Loss in support of Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom. The first increment was announced November 30, 2001 and focused on Active Army Special Forces soldiers and certain Aviation specialties. The fourth and last increment was announced February 14, 2003, and directed the Active Component (AC) Unit Stop Loss for units supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. On May 27, 2003, Secretary Brown approved lifting AC Unit Stop Loss and a third partial lift of stop loss for selected skills subject to Stop Loss one through four.

Prior to Operations Noble Eagle and

Enduring Freedom, the Army last used Stop Loss during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990 when President George H. Bush delegated Stop Loss authority to the Secretary of Defense.

Stop loss does not affect most involuntary separations or retirements, nor does it generally limit laws, regulations, or policies that lead to involuntary separations, retirements, or releases from active duty.

Analysis for the Global War on Terrorism is on going. The Army's determination to lift RC Unit Stop Loss and the remaining two skills under 12-Month, Skill-Based Stop Loss will be addressed shortly.

Contributed by Army News Service

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Mosul TV independent, running

Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis
22nd MPAD

The official opening of TV Mosul, July 2, marked the first step on the road to free press for northern Iraq.

The significance of the event was not overshadowed by the participants who included the mayor of Mosul, Gahnim al-Basso, and Brig. Gen. Jeffrey J. Schloesser the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), assistant division commander for support, who both came to express their support for the regional television station.

Al-Basso cut the streamer at the entrance of the facility to begin the festivities. Independent journalists from throughout the region also came to catch a glimpse of history in the making through their, now free, camera lenses.

"I congratulate the people of Mosul as well as the people of the Nineveh province," Schloesser said. "I think this new independent television channel, Channel Seven, is a wonderful step in the right direction for independent media. It shows progress down a democratic path. As you know, the foundation of democracy lies in a free media, so I think this is a wonderful, wonderful thing."

Schloesser continued the live broadcast in fluent Arabic for the next 15 minutes about Coalition Forces' continuing efforts to bring security and peace to the region.

This is the first time since Saddam ruled the country that journalists can go into their communities and report on what they want without direction from a regime according to many local journalists. Before the war the station served as Saddam's Baghdad-news downlink station for the Ba'ath Socialist Party.

Initial estimates of the damage by Coalition Provisional Authority contractors said it would take \$180,000 and three months to make the station operational. The challenge came June 9 when Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commanding general, 101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.), tasked members of the U.S. Army's 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, from Fort Bragg, NC, to have the main station effectively operating by June 23 – just 14 days later. Maj. Charmaine Means, a public affairs officer and team leader with the detachment, worked with regional broadcast manager, Ahmed Jassim Mohammed, by providing for the needs of the station while sticking



Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis

Abdulla A. Abdulla, engineer, Mosul T.V., shows damage done by looters to Maj. Charmaine Means, A Team Leader, 22nd MPAD, and Mahir Hazim translator, CMOC PAO.

to the principle that "the man who builds his own house will love it more". One of those needs included being paid. With her help and that of others, the employees, received April's back salary from CPA June 13, but no more, unlike the majority of government workers throughout Iraq who have received April, May and June's payments. With this assistance, the focused efforts to rebuild the station began the same day with the help of all 120 regional employees of Mosul and Sinjar TV and Radio.

Another division contribution through Means came in supplying the station with little more than \$15,000 from the commander's discretionary fund to buy cabling and basic building repair materials to replace what was destroyed or stolen

during the war. The division also provided security so the employees could work freely to keep their channel on the air without the concern of looters or local intimidation. Jassim and his team had Mosul TV fully functional three days ahead of the commanding general's request.

The station currently uses 1970s equipment to produce their regional news, which makes it hard for them to operate at the standard needed to keep up with modern technology and information needs. Most of the equipment is either created locally by craftsmen or salvaged from scrap parts as they are available around the region.

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Q West airstrip ready for business

After 69 days of around-the-clock work, soldiers of the 37th Engineer Battalion, Fort Bragg N.C., have repaired the craters littering the main airstrip at Qayyarah West, impeding planes from landing there, establishing a more secure route for much needed items.

The craters are the result of precision bombing by American planes during both Gulf Wars, said Sgt. 1st Class Rene Figuerdo, Bravo Company, 37th Eng. Bn.

About 13 craters were gouged out of the 2.2-mile long main strip, and another 30 destroyed surrounding runways and lesser

airstrips. Some of the craters reached 30 feet in depth, and 120 feet in diameter, Figuerdo said.

Airfield damage repair is a long process, requiring much effort. Teams of four to five light equipment engineers tackle each main-strip hole, said Sgt. David Cotton, squad leader, B Co. 37th Eng. Bn.

"One hole, from start to finish, takes seven to nine days to repair," Figuerdo said. "Small teams work more efficiently."

To repair the craters, crews first had to clean the upheaval around the rims. The teams also broke up



Spc. Joshua Hutcheson

From left to right, Sgt. Robert Michael, Sgt. David Cotton, squad leaders and Sgt. 1st Class Rene Figuerdo, platoon leader, Bravo Company, 37th Engineer Battalion, Fort Bragg N.C., stand at the bottom of a 20-foot deep crater made by an American bomb at an airfield in northern Iraq. So far the engineers have repaired 22 of 43 holes

See AIRSTRIP, Page 6

REUP, from Page 2

The soldiers reenlisting represented 36 states in the Union and came from every major unit within the 101st. They crowded the palace compound and gave a new meaning to "standing-room only" as they flocked to the ceremony.

For each soldier affirming his oath of service, there was a different face, a different set of skills brought to the table, and a different reason for staying in the ranks.

"It was the \$15,000 bonus," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Keen, Company D, 311th Military Intelligence Battalion. "Plus, it's a good job."

Keen has been in the Army for about seven years as a Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System common ground station operator, a career field specialty currently in high demand. He committed himself to six more years Friday.

"I would have reenlisted anyway without the bonus," said Keen, who plans on "going the full 20" to retirement. His wife, at Fort Campbell with their two children, has been very supportive of his move, he said.

"She's happy," Keen said. "She's glad I'm going to stay in."

Staff Sgt. Tim Danko, Jr., a military policeman with the 194th Military Police Company currently attached to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Unit in Al Kut, said his decision to reenlist was driven in part by wanting to see how far he can go in the Army.

"I've only been in six years, and I've made E-6, so I'm going to stay in," Danko said. "When we get back, I'm going to put in for Drill Sergeant. My goal is to make E-7 in 10 (years)."

Danko signed on for four more years with the Army. His wife, an Army recruiter in Clarksville, did not get a chance to voice her opinion about his reenlistment, but he's sure that she will be supportive when she finds out, Danko said.

"She doesn't know yet — I can't get a hold of her," Danko said. "But we both know we're going to stay in, so it's all good."

Danko said he did not get a retention bonus, but was happy his retention noncommissioned officer was able to make good on the promise to bring him up to Mosul from Al Kut so he could participate in the ceremony.

"You get to reenlist in Iraq with the general," Danko said. "How cool is that?"

The soldiers reenlisting lined the palace balcony and steps as Petraeus personally swore them in. Each one of them later received a division coin and had a personal photograph taken with the general.

"Even in our command group, everyone above us is keenly aware that we are now in our fifth month of this deployment, that it's getting real, real hot, and that the mission remains tough," Petraeus said. "I can assure you that everyone who has come through here...they are all deeply grateful for what you have done, for what our division has done, in liberating Iraq and now in winning the peace."

Reporters from Agence France-Presse, Iraqi Media Network, The New Yorker, and the Baghdad Bulletin came to cover the festivities, which included a recorded cannon salute to the 50 States of the Union and a concert given by the 101st Airborne Division band. Hundreds of the division's soldiers also witnessed the reenlistment of their fellow soldiers.

"Thanks to all of you for being here tonight. Thanks for supporting the great Screaming Eagles as they raise their right hand, and thanks for all that I know you are going to do in the months ahead," Petraeus said.

Sgt. James Vicar, a generator mechanic with Company C, 8th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, has been serving for 12 years and just committed himself to two more years.

"(The deployment has) been pretty good," he said. "My wife's grandfather passed away and I couldn't be back for that, but it's been pretty good."

Vicar said his military service has thus far taken him all over the world. He has been deployed to Kosovo, twice to Saudi Arabia, served a tour in Germany, and now he has reenlisted in Iraq, in a palace once owned by Saddam Hussein.

His decision to reenlist was a simple one, he said.

"I'm enjoying the daylights out of the Army," he said. "Everyone else should."

Contributed by
Pfc. James Matise
101st Abn. Div. (AASlt.) PAO



Pfc. James Matise

Col. Greg Gass, commander, 101st Aviation Regiment, and Maj. Fred Wellman, operations officer, 6th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, discuss road improvement plans with Dr. Mohammed Ishmai Akhmed, the sheikh of Jadali Sofa, Iraq.

VILLAGES, from page 1

“They’re willing to move the pipe themselves,” Wellman said. “They just need money for the fixture.”

The aviators have also started surfacing the dirt roads between the villages with rock and gravel making them more serviceable. Road conditions commonly force drivers to drive out of the way in order to reach a main highway. A common route takes drivers along the airfield’s outer perimeter.

“We can divert the traffic so it doesn’t have to go right along our perimeter, that will be good for security,” Wellman said.

Many of these roads also cut through dry riverbeds called wadhis. When the rains come, the wadhis flood and become impassible. One day while Wellman was visiting the villages, a wadhi flooded and he had to make a severe detour to get from one point to another only six kilometers away, Wellman said.

“It took me 35 minutes to drive six kilometers,” he said.

The aviators will work with engineers to first make the wadhis passable during bad weather, and will then lay rock and gravel

along more than 50 kilometers of dirt roads.

“The most important thing is fixing the wadhis,” Wellman said.

The road materials and trucks for transportation were procured from a gravel pit near Al Qayyarah at a very competitive price, Wellman said.

The first two truckloads of rock and gravel arrived June 28, and were dumped into a ford near Jadali Sofa. It was just enough to fix the first passage, leaving much more work to be done before the road project is complete.

“Well, it’s a start,” Wellman said.

The aviators are also planning to build a new school in each village that does not already have a schoolhouse, Wellman said.

Ajbah already has a schoolhouse. In fact, it’s one of the sturdiest buildings in the mud-brick village. It only needs a little work to become fully operational. The aviators are buying new furniture and schoolbooks for it now. They are also looking for instructors to replace the old teachers.

“The teachers were paid to show up and not teach the kids,” Wellman said. “The teachers would show up, do nothing, and leave two hours later. Most of the kids stopped coming to school. There’s 150

children in this village and only 20 or so come to school.”

Schoolteachers are in high demand across the region. The school’s last teachers were driving up from Al Qayyarah to teach. Wellman said the aviators are looking at hiring Kurdish teachers to live and work in Ajbah.

Jadali Sofa will also be getting a brand-new medical clinic built right next to its new school. Dr. Mohammed Ismahi Akhmed, the sheikh of Jadali Sofa and a well-respected man around the region, has not been actively practicing for some time because he has no facility to receive patients, Wellman said.

Akhmed, a wiry gentleman with large glasses speaks fluent English with a soft voice and cares greatly about his people. He has worked tirelessly with the aviators to get many of the regional projects off the ground, Wellman said.

“The most important difficulties will be taken over with your help,” he said. “If all the difficulties pass, we will be all right and we will become thicker.”

Contributed by
Pfc. James Matise
101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.) PAO

TV, from Page 3

Jassim held an informal grand opening for Petraeus, June 23, to show what his employees had done and what they are able to accomplish if given the opportunity.

Petraeus gladly took advantage of the opportunity to provide a tape delayed interview and other updates to the Ninevah province populace.

The official opening, Wednesday, was an open house for regional journalists and other special guests to see the possibilities of the future in free press.

As U.S. troops entered Mosul two months ago, Mosul TV provided programming to the city through their emergency station, Channel 9, retransmitting international news during this tumultuous period.

They received no pay, operated with minimal equipment and stayed on the air

to keep the people of Mosul informed while voluntarily accepting programming contributions from the Coalition Forces' 22nd MPAD.

The importance of Mosul TV to the division is in it serves as direct communication for more than 100 kilometers outside the city limits to the diverse peoples of the province informing them about the contributions local coalition forces provide.

The 22nd MPAD created the Arabic-language program Iraqi Freedom News and with the help of the 40th Public Affairs Detachment, Fort Campbell, Ky, ensures it airs at least four times a week.

Petraeus's vision is to assist the media of Nineveh province to become independent, fair, and impartial.

Media employees understand and fully support this vision in an effort to bring continued peace to the region through better and open communication.

The Judge Says...

Items of legal interest to soldiers

Q: Can I cancel my car insurance while I am deployed?

A: *If you are financing your vehicle, the answer is probably no.*

Almost all financing agreements require that the borrower insure the vehicle, so that if the vehicle is stolen or destroyed the lender will still get paid. If the borrower drops insurance coverage, the financing agreement may allow the lender to purchase insurance and charge it to the borrower – usually at a rate several times higher than the original policy.

Q: Suppose my Kevlar falls off my head and out of the HMMWV on the way to the palace, and when it hits the ground it becomes unserviceable. Is that considered a "battle loss?" Who, if anyone, must pay for it?

A: *In a report of survey, a soldier can be held liable for up to one month's pay for items lost or damaged due to negligence. Be careful; you may end up buying what you break.*

Q: "I can't afford my car so I'm taking it back." An option?

A: *The purchase of a vehicle usually involves two separate contracts. One is for the sale of the vehicle, where the buyer agrees to buy the vehicle and the dealer agrees to sell it.*

Unless the buyer is paying in full, there is a second contract for the financing of the purchase price. The dealer is rarely also the lender.

By signing a contract, the borrower agrees to be bound by all of its terms. If the borrower fails to pay according to the terms of the contract, the lender can repossess the vehicle, sell it at auction, and sue the borrower for the difference between the sale amount and the balance on the loan.

Does it matter if the borrower lost his or her job? What if he or she became ill suddenly? Does inability to pay affect the borrower's obligation to pay each month?

The answer is almost certainly no. Financing agreements are drafted by lenders, not borrowers, and so the terms of such contracts favor lenders.

In a typical case, a borrower whose vehicle is repossessed will still owe the lender several thousand dollars even after the vehicle is sold.

Consult with an attorney before allowing a vehicle to be repossessed.

AIRSTRIPE, from Page 4

parts of tarmac outside the crater affected by the blasts.

Next, a survey team assesses the best soil to fill the craters. The filling has three levels. The first two layers are mostly debris blown out by the explosions. The third layer is crushed stone. This layer reaches up to one foot from the top of the blast crater. To top off the hole, a foot of reinforced cement is poured in until it reaches the rim, Figueroa said.

Heavy equipment is used in the repair process. The engineers use bucket loaders to shovel material into the craters, knobby steam rollers to compact the material, water distributors to ensure the material is compacted down correctly and evenly, and finally, smooth rollers to finish the job, said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Reick, first sergeant, Alpha Company, 37th Eng. Bn.

Some of the craters still had unexploded ordnance in them. The mine awareness group disposed of 2,000 pound bombs at the bottom of the pits, said Sgt. Robert Michaels, squad leader, B Co. 37th Eng. Bn.

So far the engineers have repaired 12 craters on the main strip and 10 on secondary runways, but the work wasn't easy, he said.

Soldiers work in shifts of six hours or longer in a 24-hour operation which adds up to 1,656 hours of work, Cotton said.

The heat is especially detrimental on the equipment, Cotton said.

The 37th Eng. Bn. trains for airfield damage. "This is the first real-world mission," Michaels said.

The work took the combined effort of 132 people, Reick said.

"A lot of planning went into this. The squad leaders accomplished the mission to standard," Figueroa said.

"The soldiers deserve all the credit," Cotton said.

With the main strip complete the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) will be able to land "any aircraft in the world" on the runways at Q West, Reick said.

*Contributed by
Spc. Joshua Hutcheson,
101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.) PAO*

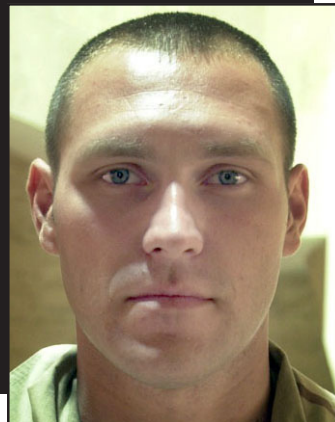
Man on the Street

What have coalition forces done for the city of Mosul?



"We made it more sanitary."

- Pfc. Nathan Wink of
Kendalville, Ind., 1-502
Infantry Regiment, 101st
Airborne Division (Air
Assault)



"They have food, water,
propane, benzene."

- Sgt. Clint Pingleton of
Dallas, Texas, 2nd Brigade
Fire Support Element, 101st
Airborne Division (Air
Assault)

"Through civil military
operations, we're helping to
build the local
infrastructure."

- Spc. Clayton Sykes of
Lubbock, Texas, 431st Civil
Affairs Battalion



"We have clearly improved
their mobility by providing
benzene."

- Maj. David Gunn of
Jacksonville, Fla., 2nd
Brigade Combat Team,
101st Airborne Division
(Air Assault)



"Our security efforts gave
the people confidence to
send their kids back to
school."

- Staff Sgt. Stanley
Armstrong of Cincinnati,
Ohio, 3-327th Infantry
Regiment, 101st Airborne
Division (Air Assault)



"The city itself needs a lot
more than meets the eye."

- Ahmed Kassim Alkhayat,
Civil Military Operations
Center Staff